

# Checklist

DEPLOYMENT | PARENTING DURING SEPARATION

For the parent(s) leaving 

## Single parents or both parents deploying

### *Reassuring children*

Deployment is a stressful time for all family members, especially children. But when *single* parents or *both* parents are deployed, there are extra challenges for families. There are several ways to comfort children during this uncertain time, including **reassuring them** that they will be safe and cared for while you are gone.

*Use the checklist below to help guide you in preparing your children and caregiver for your deployment.*

#### I ASK THE CAREGIVER TO:

- ☐ Reassure my children that they are safe and that I will do everything I can to stay safe.
- ☐ Be a sensitive listener for my children and help them feel secure.
- ☐ Show a positive attitude about my mission while I am away.
- ☐ Keep my children from seeing graphic war images in newspapers and on TV.
- ☐ Help my children celebrate special occasions while I am away.
- ☐ Help my children keep journals of things they do to share with me when I return.
- ☐ Help my children communicate with me through letters, e-mails, and phone calls.
- ☐ Help my children count down the days while I am gone.  
*Children can set up a calendar, count beans, or make paper chains.*
- ☐ Watch for signs of stress in my children (nightmares; excessive worry; anxiety about being away from home; anxiety about going to school and other activities; stomach aches, headaches; withdrawal; lack of interest; acting out; and sudden changes in eating or sleeping habits) and to seek professional help, if needed.

#### I TELL MY CHILDREN THAT:

- ☐ They will be safe and cared for while I am gone.
- ☐ I will do everything I can to stay safe and that we will be together again.
- ☐ We will stay connected through phone calls, letters, e-mails, etc.
- ☐ The caregiver will help them manage while I am gone.



IMAGINE STEPPING INTO  
YOUR CHILD'S WORLD  
AND SEEING THINGS  
FROM HIS OR HER POINT  
OF VIEW.

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